



Water Quality NewsFlash

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Sediment Standards – Board issues environmental scoping document -

The State Water Resources Control Board has posted the CEQA scoping document for the development of sediment quality objectives. Staff anticipate that scoping meetings will be held in early October. These standards are directed at sediments in enclosed bays and estuaries which the Board considers “with few exceptions the most highly polluted exposed sediments in the State.”

These standards would be used in a similar manner to water quality standards. They would be the basis for determining the need for remediation of bottom sediments contaminated by storm water runoff, industrial and sewage discharges, and other sources. Several contaminated sediment sites are on the 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies.

The federal government has developed quality criteria for water but has never recommended sediment quality criteria nor identified a methodology for the development of sediment objectives. This is partially because of the difficulty of determining whether the pollutants in the sediment are bioavailable (i.e., actually capable causing toxicity to fish or bottom dwelling organisms). Bioavailability is also an issue in determining water quality standards, but is an even greater problem in sediments since the sediment matrix itself strongly influences the toxicity of the pollutants. Furthermore, it has been difficult to identify a relationship between the total concentration of a chemical or group of chemicals and sediment toxicity.

Water quality is routinely assessed based on a single line of evidence - chemical-specific concentration-based thresholds developed from toxicological studies. The sediment standards will likely rely on some combination of multiple lines of evidence: 1) lab tests for toxicity, 2) levels of pollutants known to cause toxicity, and 3) the in-place health of organisms living in the sediment. The proposed objectives could also take into consideration bioaccumulation and the resultant human health impacts. Posted: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/bptcp/sediment.html>

Comment Period Extensions - Ocean Plan Monitoring & ASBS, Special Protections

– New submittal date is Sept.1 - <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/index.html>

Upcoming courses

- *New Development Workshop* - for construction and design groups; sponsored by Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District, Urban Runoff Management Program; September 5, Fairfield; includes discussion of 401/404 issues. <http://www.fssd.com/indexSub.cfm?page=478256>
- *Storm Water Management*; sponsored by CMAA-San Diego Chapter; September 14, San Diego; focus on new San Diego MS4 permit, contract tools for BMPs, implementation, etc. Flyer: http://www.cmaa-sd.org/documents/event_attachments/event_198.pdf

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>